

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman

Tsunetaro Miyakoda

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Editors:

Kaname Tsukahara
Mary W. Meynardie

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REACTOR GIFT TO THE JAPANESE

The 59th Triennial General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the USA, currently in session in Miami, Florida, will be asked to approve the presentation of an atomic reactor to St. Paul's University, Tokyo. Canon Charles Martin of the Washington Cathedral, Secretary of the special commission appointed by the previous Convention in Honolulu to study the question, has said the commission will recommend the gift to this Convention, as "an act of good will...that could perhaps lessen tension and enable our world to move some slight step towards that peace which all peoples desperately desire."

President Masatoshi Matsushita has gone to the Convention in Miami, prepared to appeal to the delegates for favorable consideration. It is expected he will be given an opportunity to present the University's interest when the commission's report is heard. Dr. Matsushita has prepared extensive material in support of his appeal and The Rev. William Pollard, long associated as scientist with the atomic energy project at Oak Ridge and in recent years made a priest of the Church, visited St. Paul's in the period between Conventions to survey the question with University officers and scientists.

If the commission's recommendation is adopted, a campaign to raise funds for the gift, through a church-wide appeal, will be organized. The Rt. Rev. Michael Hinsuke Yashiro, Presiding Bishop of the Nippon Seikokwai, who is a guest of the General Convention and who will be given the floor to extend the greetings of the Seikokwai as well as to speak about the present situation in this branch of the Anglican Communion, has said of the proposed gift of the atomic reactor to St. Paul's University, it is "the greatest missionary contribution" the American Church could make to his people."

THE WRATH OF IDA--TYPHOON #22

The Most destructive storm in two decades ravaged the Izu Peninsula as it sent the waters of the Kano River on a rampage that engulfed several communities in this resort area. Rains exceeding anything yet on record fell within the two-day period of the storm in the Kanto-Izu District, swelling all streams and conduits to a torrential overflow that inundated tens of thousands of acres of adjacent lands and hundreds of thousands of homes. The storm left over three thousand dead or missing, scores of bridges washed away, tens of scores of landslides and disrupted transportation facilities on most of the major and branch systems in the affected area. Those directly suffering from its caprice numbered over 500,000 and the toll of the damage wrought has yet to be estimated.

The wake of Ida was declared a disaster area and emergency relief measures were quickly undertaken by the Red Cross, and the Welfare Ministry, in whose work the Self Defense and Security Forces played a considerable part along with scores of welfare service agencies, local and national.

The Japan Office of Church World Service went into action at once, deploying inspection teams to the more seriously affected towns and villages and readying supplies of relief goods to be distributed. The churches pledged their cooperation and shared in the task of survey, and began planning for nation-wide appeal to their memberships for financial and other aid to the victims.

Japan Church World Service announced its intention of providing such help as it could without regard to religious affiliation, and in cooperation with the Welfare Ministry undertook to distribute some tens of thousands of pounds of powdered milk, flour, some hundreds of cases of soap and tons of clothing; and with the help of the ladies and youth organizations of local churches set up milk stations for immediate distribution of bread and milk in several places.

The Chairman of the Social Problems Commission of the United Church of Christ has declared that "this is the worst flood damage he has encountered in his experience, although the damage to churches and the suffering of church families were not as great as it was feared they might be." The United Church Commission and its counterpart of other denominations have set under way plans to bring all possible resources of the churches to the aid of the typhoon sufferers.

AVACO ADDS RADIO PROGRAM

A new fifteen minute radio program, entitled "My Music" is to be prepared by AVACO at the request of the Osaka Broadcasting-Corporation. It will feature classical Christian music to be broadcast each Saturday morning, 10: 45, over OBC, one of Osaka's largest radio stations with potential listening audience of 1,500,000. The program will appeal to people who are familiar with the music but are not aware of its Christian background and "content".

Soichi Tsuji, well-known music critic and interpreter, will give the explanatory comment. Listeners will be asked to write in their requests for music or invited to present questions about Christianity, as part of a plan of "follow-up".

CHRISTIANS AND THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY IN EDUCATION

The so-called "teachers' efficiency rating system", proposed for adoption by the Ministry of Education, interpreted by its proponents as a normal component of good administration and by its opponents as a wedge of "creeping control" by a reactionary Ministry, has aroused a bitter nation-wide controversy.

Dr. Michio Kozaki, Chairman of the National Christian Council and Pastor of Reinanzaka Church, has called "the struggle revolving around this matter... a tragedy for Japan." Solution becomes increasingly difficult where the issue is obscured by political conflict and cooperation to find a workable method acceptable to all parties is precluded.

The controversy is part and parcel with that already aroused by the decision to reinstitute morals courses in the public school curriculum. Whereas the real controversy should center around the questions of planning, timing and methods concerning which, presumable, cooperative approach might arrive at some satisfactory answers, the proposals in either case evoked absolute opposition in terms of disdain for any Ministry recommendations.

The situation "hints at a revolution in the spirit of the nation", declares Dr. Kozaki, and he goes on to say, "We who are religious people hold here a serious responsibility, and the handling of the question will reflect upon us."

LABOR SUNDAY

"We Are Workers With God" was the motto carried on the posters promoting Labor Sunday throughout the Churches of Japan, observed on September 7.

Among the current programs of the Church's work among laborers is a seminar for workers begun by the Tokyo District Occupational Evangelism Committee of the United Church of Christ. The seminar meets for two hours each Monday evening and will continue through December. The purpose of the seminar is to study the relation of Christian life and teaching to labor unions and the possibilities of Christian workers in the unions witnessing to their faith. At the same time, it is intended to increase among Christian workers understanding of the Church's concern for their welfare and for the problems of labor.

AMAGI SANJO MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF COOPERATION

The 8th annual meeting of Japanese clergy and missionaries related to the Council of Cooperation, held at Amagi Sanjo, September 24th to 26th, continued its exploration of the problems of the means and organization for promoting cooperation between these two groups, of which forty-one and fifty-nine members, respectively, attended this conference.

It was recognized that the missionaries are working at various tasks, some engaged in teaching, some in social works, some in pioneer evangelism of certain areas where they may be in charge of the local congregations; in all of these endeavours there is evidence of "success", especially in instances where the missionary's command of the local language is advanced.

At the same time, attention was called to the difference in the missionary's situation, his organizational and financial support, which sets him apart, as it were, from most of his Japanese colleagues and gives him certain advantages in his work which they cannot share. Or there may be peculiar advantages of working in a given locality, enjoyed by some missionaries that are not equally available to others.

Where qualified, it is desirable to have a missionary employed as the pastor in charge of a congregation; that is, when the missionary is an ordained person, he should be considered for such responsibility and not confine his work to school teaching, Bible class, or evangelical outreach.

These and related matters were discussed together with the advances in cooperation already made and concrete plans for future advance.

KAGAWA HONORED ON SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

A combined celebration was held to honor Toyohiko Kagawa on his seventieth birthday and on the occasion of the publication of his book, "The Purpose of the Universe." This work, expressing Dr. Kagawa's thoughts on the order of the universe, the World, and God's order in the universe, is the result of thoughts over the past fifty years, with writing done over a period of 17 years. Students of Kagawa's books are looking forward to a study of this philosophical work.

With the publication of the book and Kagawa's birthday coming so close together, a special celebration was planned with 300 leaders from Christian, political, business and cultural circles meeting together at the Fujimicho Church to offer congratulations. Besides his many Japanese friends, the members of the Lacour Special Evangelism Team attended the birthday party. Mr. Lacour brought a special birthday message from the editor of the devotional booklet, "Upper Room."

In his response to congratulatory speeches, Dr. Kagawa said that during the Sino-Japanese war when he was placed in solitary confinement by the military police because of his peace activities, he read the Bible and a book titled, "The Evolution of the Frames of Mammals." There is a limit to human power, he said, and the only alternative we have when faced with our limitation is to depend on that Absolute Power which rules the universe.

Also in connection with the celebration of his 70th birthday, a film is being made of Kagawa's life and work. Production of the film will be completed by the end of August.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST, KOMAKICHI MATSUOKA DIED

Mr. Komakichi Matsuoka died at the age of 70 on August 14 at St. Luke's hospital in Tokyo. In the Japanese voting of last spring, he had been elected for his sixth term as a member of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Matsuoka was known for his leadership in the cause of labor, and was **known** as the Gompers of Japan. He had been at one time the speaker of the Lower House, Head of the Japan Federation of Labor Unions. A socialist, he was a member of the Ohi Church (Baptist) in Tokyo.

